



The shared focus

Word play lovers having fun on the internet may wonder about the recurrent quartet Europass, EQF, ECVET, ECTS, which pops up in any order permutation. If wonder spurns them to more active research, they might discover that these are four European initiatives related with education and training policy. Most investigators would stop there. Those who persist would detect that there is more than the initial clues suggest, that there actually is a pattern behind that frequent proximity: indeed, those four are a team.

It is enough to venture as far as the very first lines of their legal bases to realize what the team is up to. Since 2005, Europass is meant to support the mobility of learners and workers in Europe, through better transparency of qualifications and competences. EQF and ECVET make it clear since the beginning that they have a common plan: facilitate transnational mobility for workers and learners by supporting the recognition of their knowledge, skills and competence.

The incipit of their respective Recommendations (in 2008 and 2009) is deliberately the same. ECTS, which has no such founding act, but the title of the 2010 leaflet on ECTS labels reveals the plan: make mobility a reality.

Europass, EQF, ECTS, ECVET are all there to help citizens 'move': progress to further learning, access the labour market, find a better job, in no matter which European country. As the enquiry into the four tools goes on, there appears to be a division of tasks, as you would expect in a line up of four: EQF facilitates communication between qualification systems, ECVET and ECTS between institutions, and Europass between individual jobseekers and employers. There is truth in this, in particular that the tools complement each other.

But highlighting the different attack lines should not hide the common core concept: EQF, ECVET, ECTS, Europass are about what people know and are able to do. This shared focus on the outcomes of the learning process is what binds them together, beyond internet word plays, and what allows them contribute in practice to improving mobility.

At this stage of the investigation, the legitimate question is – well, is the Europass-EQF-ECTS-ECVET team doing the job? The studies on the evaluation of Europass and EQF will give a better insight, but for sure building a Europe where all can move freely to study and work requires reinforcing the team. There is work ahead for our quartet.

Europass coordination team



Zusammenfassung

Die zweite Ausgabe des Europass-Newsletters widmet sich der Familie der europäischen Transparenzinstrumente zu Aus- und Weiterbildung. Nach einer Einführung im Editorial werden auf den Seiten 2 bis 5 die spezifischen Funktionen von europäischen Instrumenten wie EQF, ECVET, ECTS und Europass, aber auch ihr wechselseitiges Zusammenspiel herausgearbeitet. Auf den Seiten 6 und 7 wird die Europass-Zeugniserläuterung detailliert beschrieben, ergänzt durch Beispiele aus europäischen Ländern, in denen dieses Dokument bereits erfolgreich implementiert ist. Einige Europass-Zentren haben vor kurzem ihre NutzerInnen befragt; die Ergebnisse finden Sie auf Seite 8. Die Seiten 9 und 10 bieten Aktuelles und Kurzinfos.

Einen anregenden Herbst wünscht das Europass-Netzwerk.

En bref

Ce second numéro du bulletin d'information Europass est consacré à la famille des outils européens en matière de transparence de l'enseignement et de la formation. Dans son éditorial, l'équipe de coordination Europass effectue les présentations; vous découvrirez en pages 2 à 5 une série d'articles consacrés au CEC, à l'ECVET, à l'ECTS et à Europass, décrivant la fonction spécifique de chaque outil et leur complémentarité. En pages 6 et 7: gros plan sur le Supplément descriptif du certificat, illustré par des exemples de mise en œuvre réussie dans plusieurs pays européens. En page 8: découvrez les résultats de plusieurs enquêtes utilisateurs effectuées par les Centres Nationaux Europass. Enfin, pour tout savoir sur l'actualité Europass: rendez-vous en pages 9 et 10.

Le réseau Europass vous souhaite une excellente rentrée.

European tools and principles for skills and qualifications

The EU Member States - in close cooperation with the social partners and supported by the EU Commission and Cedefop - have during the last decade introduced a number of European reference tools. These tools aim to increase the transparency of qualifications, support mobility and benefit citizens by providing a systematic way to document and validate their knowledge, skills and competences.



Developing European tools and principles has stimulated dialogue among governments, social partners, institutions, learners and VET providers from public and private sectors. A shared understanding of qualifications and how they relate to each other is emerging. The dialogue has also improved links between different parts of national education and training systems; how systems of other countries relate to each other; and how education and training can be more relevant to labour

market needs. All this is based on systematic use of the learning outcomes principle for defining and describing qualifications – stressing what a learner is expected to know, be able to do or understand. This facilitates comparison of qualifications across institutional and geographical borders, supporting lifelong and life-wide learning.

The **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** and the **European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQAVET)** operate at the systemic level. The EQF aims to relate different countries' national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework, agreed in 2008. This framework consists of eight levels that describe learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences at different degrees of complexity. The different certificates at national level can be related to the EQF levels. EQAVET, which was adopted by EU Member States in June 2009, is a reference tool for policy-makers based on a four-stage quality cycle that includes goal setting and planning, implementation, evaluation and review. It provides guidelines and indicators to assure high quality VET.

EQF and EQAVET contribute to confidence and trust in educational systems, and permit individuals and employers better to understand qualifications, making mobility and the process of validation and recognition of learning easier.

To this end, other useful tools are the credit systems. Citizens can be granted credits for specific knowledge, skills and competences (learning outcomes) acquired, and these credits can be recognised in other countries or other educational programmes. Organising qualifications through credits creates more flexible pathways to education, encourages lifelong learning and a more efficient mobility. The **European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)** and **Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)** are the reference tools to develop credit systems across Europe. ECTS focuses on higher education, while ECVET is directed to VET provision.

The different qualifications and credits awarded can be documented using the templates provided through **Europass**. Europass is a service available to individuals through a network of National Centres and an online Portal. It consists of five documents (Europass CV, Language Passport, Certificate Supplement, Diploma Supplement and Europass Mobility) that can be used across Europe to make people's knowledge and experience more easily understood.

The **European Commission is developing the European Skills, Competences and Occupations taxonomy (ESCO)**. It will describe the most relevant skills, competences and qualifications needed for several thousand occupations. Once finished, ESCO will provide a standard reference for describing what a person knows or is able to do. This taxonomy will be able to be used in the different tools described above, increasing their mutual synergy.

Cedefop is heavily **involved** in supporting the development and implementation of these tools. A challenge in the coming years will be to ensure greater consistency between the tools and make sure that they become accessible to all citizens - making a positive difference to their learning and work careers.

Ernesto Villalba-Garcia | Cedefop

Click on the tools' logos on the right for more information



A pathway to implement the ECVET recommendation

Between 2008 and 2011 the EU financed eleven pilot projects to test the specifications of ECVET, all of which gave [interesting results](#).

The [OPIR project](#) (coordinated by Belgian French speaking community) tested, in the course of its two-year lifespan, the use of ECVET for geographical mobility between seven European countries/regions (France, Romania, Spain, Italy, Belgium-French speaking, Poland, and Switzerland). One of the results is linked with the political willingness of the BE-fr government to reform the educational system. The Ministry of Education is currently implementing a reform called [Certification Par Unités \(CPU\)](#) that takes the findings of the OPIR project into account. The CPU was launched in 2011 and concerns, for now, three sectors: automobile, "horeca" (hotel, restaurant, café), and beauty therapy. Among the main objectives of the reform are preventing early school leaving and increasing mobility between VET secondary schools both in Belgium and across Europe.

To coordinate this process, and the implementation of other European tools such EQF, a new service has been developed: the SFMQ (Service Francophone des Métiers et des Qualifications):

"It's absolutely necessary to offer a place where all information is concentrated. This service is also responsible for the content of the different learning profiles and units. That's the only way to guarantee mutual trust between VET actors inside our region, and I think that in the near future this kind of service will become essential at the European level as well, to ensure the success of ECVET" believes Alain Bultot, who coordinated the OPIR project and who is now leading the BE-fr ECVET expert team.

Europass linked with ECVET

Another key aspect concerning the implementation of ECVET is the resulting document where VET credit points will be notified. "There is a need to create a new common EU document for ECVET, and here the Europass portfolio should be concerned. The upcoming developments in Europass (the European Skills Passport dossier and the Europass Experience document) offer an excellent opportunity to provide a place for ECVET credits. This will be a win-win partnership in which both tools will gain added value and credibility," Alain Bultot concludes.

Patrick Meuwissen | National Europass Centre Belgium-fr



Learning outcomes. The underlying principle of the European reference tools in education and training

Learning outcomes are commonly defined as statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence. Recent Cedefop studies show that European education and training policies and practises are increasingly influenced by the learning outcomes principle – notably through a redefinition of standards, curricula and assessment approaches. In a situation where employment depends on continuous lifelong and life-wide learning, the shift to learning outcomes is important for a number of reasons:

- The learning outcomes perspective allows individuals to judge what is offered in a particular course and how this links with other courses and programmes.
- Using learning outcomes allows employers to judge what to expect from holders of qualifications and potential employees.
- By focussing on what has actually been achieved, and less on how it was achieved, the learning outcomes approach facilitates validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- The shift to learning outcomes is about creating a common language reducing barriers between education and training institutions and strengthening the link between education and training and the labour market.
- Learning outcomes are important for international cooperation, allowing us to focus on the profile and content of qualifications, rather than on the particularities of the institutions delivering them.

Most European countries now see the shift to learning outcomes as a condition for modernising their education and training systems. This conviction is, however, combined with a growing understanding that learning outcomes must be appropriately understood and applied - their use should be based on the principle of 'fit for purpose'. The use of learning outcomes for referring national qualifications levels to the EQF is not the same as using learning outcomes when defining standards, developing curricula or designing assessment approaches.

Recent Cedefop studies have underlined that the shift to learning outcomes must be combined with a strong focus on learning processes and assessment forms. Learning outcomes need to be developed as an integrated part of education and training, not in isolation. The work of Cedefop has furthermore shown that the shift to learning outcomes is too weakly linked to systematic quality assurance and that this now needs to be given increased priority.

Ernesto Villalba-Garcia | Cedefop

For further reading on this theme, see the box on page 5

The implementation of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian National Qualifications Framework (BQF) was adopted by a Council of Ministers' Decision No 96 of 2 February 2012. The Bulgarian government, as is the case in other Member States, sees the Framework as a precondition for implementing the [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#) and an important national priority, which was set in the Programme for the European Development of Bulgaria (2009–2013).

The BQF is a single comprehensive framework which includes qualifications from all levels and subsystems of education and training (pre-primary, primary and secondary general education, VET and higher education). It will provide a normative base for validating non-formal and informal learning.

The process of referencing to the EQF and to QF/EHEA in Bulgaria started in 2007 when a multilateral working group was formed involving representatives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, the Council of Rectors and of higher education institutions, with the task to elaborate a design of a qualifications framework for higher education. The design developed by that working group served as a basis for the elaboration of the overall BQF design compatible with the EQF and QF/EHEA. The elaboration of the framework for higher education was set as an objective in the National Lifelong Learning Strategy of Bulgaria (2008 – 2013), with the implementation deadline in 2011. That strategy defined the development of the BQF as a next step.

Currently, a pilot project of a single Referencing and Self-Certification Report of Bulgaria to the EQF and QF-EHEA is under development and is to be finalized shortly. National consultations with stakeholders are foreseen for the autumn of 2012. In Bulgaria it is planned to refer to the EQF levels in all diplomas and professional certificates issued in line with the national legislation. Within one year all national legislation regulating education shall be aligned with the principles of the BQF.

The resulting legislation includes Europass as an important tool, and specifically the use of the Europass Certificate Supplement and the Diploma Supplement. The necessary steps to reference these two documents to the EQF levels, including referencing of the Diploma Supplement to the corresponding levels of the QF/EHEA, will be taken during the process of alignment of the Bulgarian legislation with the BQF.

Elena Mircheva | National Europass Centre Bulgaria

Quality matters: Applying for the ECTS Label

The University of Oulu in Finland was awarded its first Diploma Supplement Label as early as 2006. The upcoming challenge is applying for the ECTS Label in the autumn 2012 selection round. In an effort to comply with the ECTS Label criteria, the university set about re-writing and standardising its course catalogue, a process that has turned out to be an effective quality assurance instrument in itself.

The work put into reforming the qualification structure and course descriptions have strengthened the co-ordination of educational provision at the university, and helped clarify responsibilities. "Applying for the ECTS Label has been a joint effort of the whole university," says Vice-Rector Olli Silvén. "The process has contributed to improving the curriculum structures and contents, as well as helping to detect shortcomings in curriculum development. Now it is much easier to see what programmes are offered and what are the requirements for their completion."

Among the most challenging tasks associated with the Label application have been the creation of ECTS-compatible, harmonised, learning outcome-based descriptions of programmes and courses in Finnish and English, and ensuring that all qualification requirements are balanced in terms of work-load. Another significant part of the work has been dedicated to creating a common system of recognition of prior learning.

The new programme and course descriptions have been well received. The university's website has 16 000 visitors each month now. The marketing of its educational provision in Finland and abroad has become much easier and the number of applications to the university's degree programmes increased by 8% from the previous year.

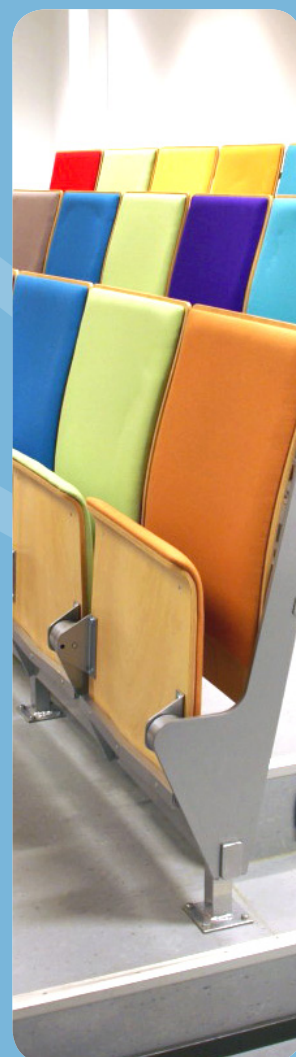
"The application processes for the ECTS and Diploma Supplement Labels have raised awareness of European quality criteria and contributed to the quality work of the university".

The University of Oulu's educational services can be found at <http://www oulu.fi/education/>.

Suvi Jutila and Tytti Tenhula | University of Oulu, Academic Affairs

Note from the European Commission:

Applications for the ECTS Label will be assessed by a team of independent academic experts during the autumn 2012 and results will be known in early 2013.



DISCO: Terminological support for skills and competences

DISCO – the European Dictionary of Skills and Competences – is an online thesaurus of skills and competences that allows you to translate the terminology into 10 European languages: English, French, German, Czech, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Slovak, Spanish, and Swedish. Besides skills and competence terms, the new DISCO thesaurus also includes short phraseological competence descriptions based on learning outcomes for the sectors of environmental protection, information technology, health, social services, as well as for the non-domain specific area.

The updated project website is available at www.disco-tools.eu. On the website the DISCO thesaurus can be browsed and several European documents such as Europass CV, Europass Certificate Supplement, Europass Mobility and Occupational/Qualification Profiles can be filled in and translated by using DISCO terminology. DISCO supports these instruments by offering a variety of terms and phraseological competence statements to describe occupations, qualifications, skills and competence profiles. DISCO is an online tool and can be used by both end-users and experts, for example in the fields of vocational counselling, HR management, skills research, employment or vocational education and training.

*Heidemarie Müller-Riedlhuber, Petra Ziegler
3s Unternehmensberatung, Austria*

New publication on how Europass and ECVET can work together

One important tool to increase the quality of Europass, and here especially the quality of the description of learning outcomes in the Europass Mobility (EM) documents, is ECVET.

In order to help sending organizations and their foreign partners to correctly and substantially fill the EM documents, the German NEC and the NK-ECVET (National Coordination Centre ECVET) decided to develop a brochure which explains how learning outcomes can be best described.

The working title of the brochure is "A Signpost into the Future", and its publication is scheduled for October 2012. It describes the basics of ECVET, explains the transfer of learning outcomes from one country to another, and underlines the importance of the learning- and partnership agreements. The brochure introduces EM as the individual certificate of performance, and gives examples and phrasing guidelines for the description of learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences – see [http://www.ecvet-info.de/_media/Leitfaden_zur_Formulierung_von_Lernergebniseinheiten\(3\).pdf](http://www.ecvet-info.de/_media/Leitfaden_zur_Formulierung_von_Lernergebniseinheiten(3).pdf).

Uta-M. Behnisch | National Europass Centre Germany

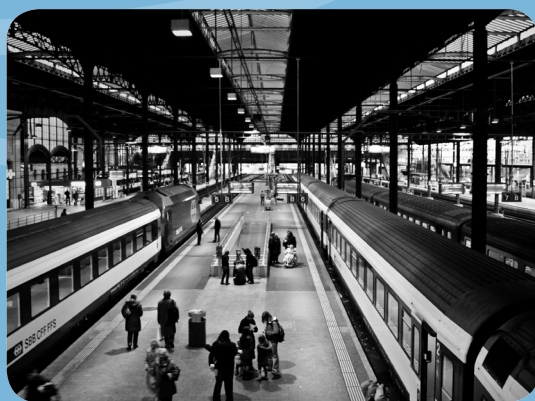
The ECMO project: ECVET meets Europass Mobility

After several years of development of the European transparency instruments, the interlinkages between them and possibilities of combination are more and more in focus. The ECMO project has taken a step in this direction by combining two of the instruments: ECVET and the Europass Mobility.

The aim is to use Europass Mobility as a documentation instrument for ECVET and to make proposals for a further development of Section 5a of the document. The possibility of using Section 5a as a documentation instrument for ECVET has been tested through mobility projects in the hotel and restaurant sector by utilising competence matrices created according to the VQTS model.

Furthermore, Europass Mobility has been used as a basis for mutual trust as well as a bridge across the differences in requirements for evaluation and documentation in the partner countries. Eventually, learning outcomes have been assessed and validated based on the modified Europass Mobility Section 5a.

Sonja Lengauer | 3s research laboratory, Austria



Further reading

- > Cedefop (2009a) The shift to learning outcomes: Policies and practices in Europe.
- > Cedefop (2009b) The relationship between quality assurance and VET certification in EU Member States.
- > Cedefop (2010) Learning outcomes approaches in VET curricula. A comparative analysis of nine European countries.
- > Cedefop (2011) Briefing note: When defining learning outcomes in curricula, every learner matters.
- > European Commission and Cedefop (2011) Using learning outcomes European Qualifications Framework Series: Note 4.
- > Cedefop* Learning Outcomes in initial vocational education and training: Implications for curriculum design and implementation across Europe. (*forthcoming)

Europass Certificate Supplement

Implementation of the Certificate Supplement - state of play

The Europass Certificate Supplement, one of the five Europass documents, complements the information included in vocational qualifications and makes easier for third persons to understand their content. It is not a substitute for the original certificate; neither does it guarantee recognition in another country.

The Certificate Supplement provides the following information: skills and competences acquired, range of occupations accessible by the holder, certification and accreditation bodies, level of the certificate, assessment method (grading scale and pass requirements), further training level accessible, agreements for international recognition of the qualification, legal basis, type of training (school-/ training centre-based or workplace-based), duration, requirements to enter the training, etc.)

The Europass Certificate Supplement (ECS) helps:

- job-seekers to explain to an employer what skills they have learned while studying/in training;
- employers to understand if an applicant has the skills relevant to a position, especially when a qualification was achieved in another country.

2002-2012: state of play in the implementation

The Certificate Supplement has been developed between 2000 and 2002 by the (former) European Forum on transparency of qualifications. An internal survey conducted by the Commission in 2011 shows that

- 23 countries have made the ECS available on a website with free download;
- 11 countries have chosen to issue the ECS individually as the only option. In most cases, there is a request procedure;
- Hungary and Poland have made an individual link to the holder of the document;
- share of qualifications covered by ECS varies from less than 25% to all national qualifications.

In 2010, according to figures provided by National Europass Centres, 286 041 Certificate Supplements have been issued and 97 199 downloaded from the national inventories.

The 2011 Commission's internal survey indicates that especially young workers with limited work experience see the Certificate Supplement as an asset when looking for a job; however, the document is not sufficiently known by employers yet. Another survey carried out by National Europass Centres in 7 countries (see article in this volume, page 7) shows that although 60% of the labour market stakeholders know the CS, only 10% will ask for it when recruiting. To address this issue, National Europass Centres will launch awareness-raising campaigns to promote the use of the ECS.

The next steps:

In future, the Certificate Supplement will be better linked to the common European tools by:

- using the European Qualifications Framework to indicate the level of the certificates;
- breaking-down qualifications in ECVET units of learning outcomes;
- expressing learning outcomes using the European skills, competences and occupations (ESCO) taxonomy to describe skills acquired.

Philippe Tissot | Cedefop

Figures provided by NECs, Cedefop and EACEA

More info: [Europass website](#)
[National inventories of Europass Certificate Supplements](#)
[National Reference Points](#)

2. TRANSLATED TITLE OF THE CERTIFICATE AND OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAMME (EN) ⁽¹⁾
School-leaving certificate: LOGISTICS TECHNICIAN (ID: 603974)
<small>⁽¹⁾ This translation has no legal status.</small>

Example of Certificate Supplement
Source: NEC Slovenia

3. ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES
<p>The holder of the certificate is qualified to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – independently plan and organize freight transport in all transport sectors; – direct freight flows in accordance with prescribed regulatory requirements related to freight (customs goods, goods in free circulation, hazardous goods which need to be stored in line with a special scheme etc.); – pack, store, serve as an agent, electronically tag and declare goods in logistic and sales centres; – be familiar with and take into consideration internal and international legal sources for the handling of goods in traffic, transport and logistics; – have a good grasp of insurance procedures in individual traffic subsystems and take out transport insurance; – use preventive and defensive transport behaviour principles and provide for safety in all traffic subsystems and logistic processes; – plan traffic flows and traffic signalization; – use and complete transport documentation, keep logistics documentation, elaborate, read and understand technical documentation; – adopt a responsible attitude towards measures aimed at pollution reduction, environment protection and rational use of energy and materials;

Certificate Supplement: the labour market perspectives

Between 2011 and 2012, seven National Europass Centres (Finland, Liechtenstein, The Netherlands, Germany, Romania, Lithuania and Belgium-Flanders) started a multinational survey among different labour market stakeholders exploring their views about the Europass Certificate Supplement (ECS). The survey is still underway, yet the 370 respondents that have contributed so far allow for formulation of some interim findings.

They indicate that over 60% of respondents were aware of the existence of ECS, and 85% agree that it increases one's chances of finding a job. Most respondents find ECS giving "average to good" indication of the skills and competences of a potential employee. For employers, the detailed overview of skills and competences in ECS is the most useful information. 46.8% of the respondents think that the strongest point of ECS is that it enables understanding of the qualification of a foreign candidate.

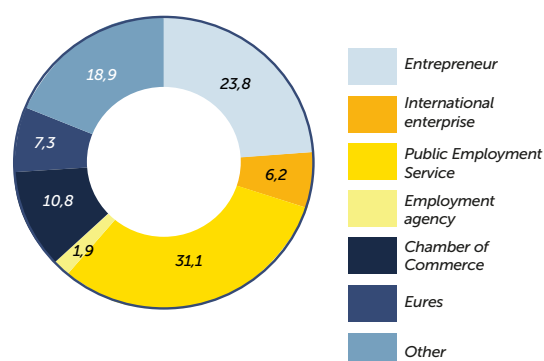
Surprisingly enough, although the above findings suggest that a majority of the labour market stakeholders have known ECS and acknowledge its potential to improve chances of finding a job, only 10% of them actually ask for it while recruiting. Only 15% of the labour market actors, on the other hand, have received an ECS from a potential employee.

The main challenge for Europass therefore seems to be reaching the employers with comprehensive information on ECS. In October, several NECs will meet to work out promotional strategies to increase the use of ECS on national labour markets.

Anneke Vanden Bulcke | National Europass Centre Belgium-Flanders

Indira von Oven | National Europass Centre of The Netherlands

Respondent structure: types of labour market stakeholders
% of total respondents
(Source: National Europass Centres BE-FL, DE, FI, LI, LT, NL, RO)



Certificate Supplement in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the Dutch National Reference Point for VET (NRP), situated at the organization SBB, is appointed to develop the Europass Certificate Supplement (ECS) for upper secondary VET qualifications. It has made over 700 ECSs available in Dutch and English via an online database. The description of skills and competences in the Dutch ECS is taken directly from the national VET qualifications, accredited by the Ministry of Education.

The ECS is used both nationally and internationally. Nationally, employers use the document to keep up with the development of new national qualifications. Internationally, the ECS contains useful information on regulated professions and is therefore helpful for national authorities. Foreign employers can also use the ECS during an interview process to compare qualifications of applicants from different countries.

As Dutch upper secondary VET has been developing constantly in the last years, standardized ECSs are available for both old-term qualifications as for newer, competence based qualifications. In 2013 the NQF and EQF levels will be added and German versions will be made available, increasing the transparency even further.

For more information, check <http://www.nlntp.nl> - going abroad - Certificate Supplement.

Indira von Oven | National Europass Centre of The Netherlands

Certificate Supplement in Slovenia

The **implementation** of the Europass Certificate Supplement in Slovenia went hand in hand with an extensive modernisation process in VET that had started in 2004 and ended this year. The renewal of all existing VET programmes followed a set of common principles such as modularisation, individualisation, credit system, significant parts of open curricula being defined by schools in cooperation with local environment etc.

In this context it seemed natural to make the Certificate Supplement contain selected subjects, more detailed information about the practical work, credit points. This reasoning had led to the decision to adopt the Europass Certificate Supplement as rather detailed document, containing in the first part the general standardised structure of the related qualification and completed afterwards by supplementary information about the individual learning pathway of each learner.

The Certificate Supplement's last page is a diagram of the Slovenian education system, which gives a clear picture of the context and the level of the educational programme concluded. The Europass Certificate Supplement, nowadays issued to nearly all Slovene VET graduates, is not just a personal document providing information on general and specific programme contents, learning outcomes, focuses and specialisations, but is also an officialised document that is issued, stamped and signed by relevant educational institutions.

Špela Pogačnik Nose | National Europass Centre Slovenia

User surveys

The recognisability of Europass documents in Latvia

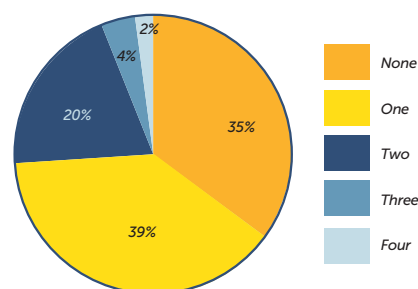
In 2011, a study was carried out in Latvia on the recognition of the Europass documents among their potential users. The study's aim was to evaluate the level and extent of the recognisability of the four Europass documents available in Latvia – CV, Language Passport, Mobility and Diploma Supplement.

Outcomes show that 46% of the respondents knew at least one of the Europass documents by its title, and 65% could identify at least one of the demonstrated examples. Europass CV has the best recognisability – by its depiction or title it was recognized by approximately 70% of the respondents.

It also appears that Europass is better known through separate documents than as a whole portfolio. However, some 80% of the respondents in Latvia support the idea of a standard CV and of other documents to be used both nationally and internationally to describe skills and competences acquired.

Marta Valdmane | National Europass Centre Latvia

Number of documents recognised by depiction
(Source: NEC Latvia)



Age structure and opinions of Europass CV users in Portugal

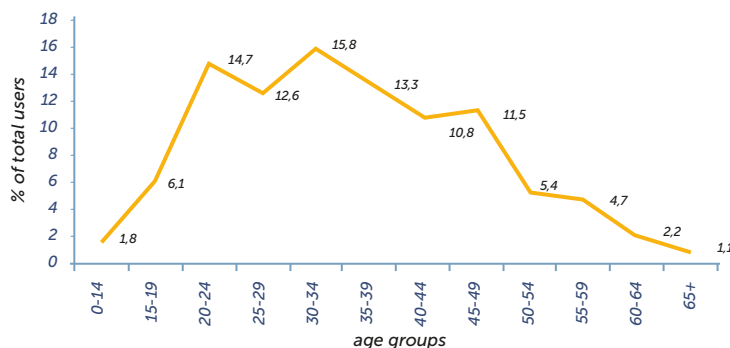
Why is it that the Portuguese use the Europass CV the most among European citizens, according to NECs' reports? In 2011, an online survey was conducted to find out who those Portuguese CV users are, and what they like about the tool.

A sample of 285 respondents shows a surprisingly even distribution of Europass CV among age groups. The combined age group 30 to 49 years, i.e. those already active in the labour market, amounts to 51,4% of total users. However, the 35,2% for the combined age group up to 29 years indicate that young people are a significant user group of the Europass CV as well.

According to the opinions expressed by the respondents, the Europass CV model is comprehensive and user friendly, and is highly appreciated by recruitment agencies and employers. The employers, that were also interviewed, appreciated that the Europass CV closely focuses on skills and competences, unlike traditional CVs.

Catarina Oliveira | National Europass Centre Portugal

Age structure of Europass CV users in Portugal
(Source: NEC Portugal)



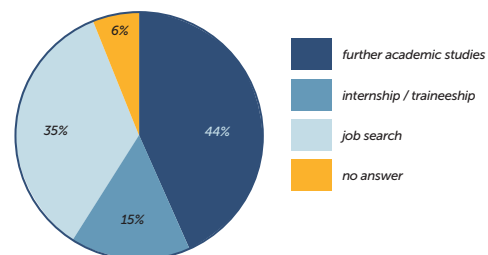
The Diploma Supplement in Italian higher education

The Italian NEC conducted an online survey among Italian universities in 2011, when most of the requirements of the Bologna process have been implemented, to get a better picture of the use the Diploma Supplement.

Seventy-six universities were interviewed using an online questionnaire. Whilst 78,4% of Italian academic institutions issue the Diploma Supplement on students' demand, 21,6% are not able to administer or issue the document. The number of DS issued in each university is quite low, however. In order to investigate the lack of demand for the document, contact persons at universities were invited to ask graduates the reasons why they would request a DS. As expected, the final beneficiaries need the document mainly to undertake further academic studies abroad. Although potential use in job search is also mentioned by respondents, there is a need to disseminate information on the potential use of this transparency tool more widely among the labour market stakeholders in order to enhance the employability of Italian graduates both at home and in the EU.

Alessandra Biancolini | National Europass Centre Italy

What the Italian students use Diploma Supplement for?
(Source: NEC Italy)



Europass Mobility for volunteers in The Netherlands (Domestic Mobility)

"I do voluntary work because I like to learn things. Before I started my vocational training for a car mechanic, I had an interview at the educational institute about my experience. I show up my Europass Mobility for volunteers. They were deeply impressed."
Terence Holman, a volunteer at Active Young Foundation.

Volunteers want to do meaningful work that they enjoy and love. Sincere appreciation by the employer of the work they conduct is important for them. In addition, some volunteers work because they want to expand their knowledge and skills and pave their way to a paid job. Volunteers are active in many organisations. Without them some things could not be organised, e.g. due to lack of funding. And that is just one of the various benefits volunteers bring to the society.



The Europass Mobility document for volunteers can help to explain what a volunteer has learned during a period of voluntary activities. It gives a clear and objective description of the work carried out. The employer appoints the experience gained by the volunteer and highlights his or her qualities. He/she is then able to present him/herself better and increase his/her position on the labour market.

The document is signed by a sending partner (volunteer agency) and a hosting partner (where the voluntary work takes place). The period, type of work and the skills and competences gained are recorded in the document.

"With our foundation, we want to keep young people socially involved and motivate them to develop. Motivation is easily generated, but to actually keep it on is both crucial and difficult. Europass Mobility for volunteers contributes to this. The volunteers did not even know they had learned so many things. It makes them ready for next challenges. The Europass document does make voluntary work more attractive for young people."

Thijs Laan, coach at Active Young Foundation

Benefits

NEC NL has noted that organisations very much like to use Europass Mobility for volunteers. They see the value of the document in the way to put the volunteers in the spotlight and to appreciate them. When a person already holds a Europass document, a voluntary organization can estimate their talents for the next voluntary job.

NEC NL has been presenting the project to different volunteer agencies across The Netherlands. The goal is to reach organisations that want to use Europass for recognition and, at the same time, we hope to attract young people to voluntary work. First successes have been achieved. This year alone, 231 documents have been issued by volunteer agencies, and counting.

Monique Leegte | National Europass Centre of The Netherlands

Tarja Tuominen (1962 – 2012)

We sadly inform that Ms Tarja Tuominen, a Finnish education and training expert of European renown, member of the Technical Working Group that contributed to the initial development of Europass in early 2000s and a member of the initial Europass network, has passed away this summer. For decades, Tarja contributed with her exceptional scope of expertise to many key VET initiatives both at the Finnish and European level, playing important roles in the Copenhagen process and the Lifelong Learning Programme. She represented employer organisations such as UNICE/BusinessEurope in the Cedefop Governing Board as well as in countless projects and conferences.

Tarja was respected and liked not only by colleagues from the employer sector but equally so by her counterparts from trade unions and educational organisations.

In sincere memory,
the Europass network



New National Europass Centre in Hungary

The year 2012 has brought some changes into the everyday life of Europass in Hungary. In May the [Tempus Public Foundation](#) was officially designated as the National Europass Centre Hungary. The Foundation is a non-profit organisation with the task of managing international cooperation programmes such as the Lifelong Learning Programme in Hungary and specific projects in the field of education and training, R&D and other EU-related issues.

For this year the NEC Hungary has set its priorities on promotion. The aim of its promotional activities is to provide the largest possible target audience with relevant information on the use and benefits of the Europass documents. However, special focus will be on business stakeholders, teachers, and Erasmus Alumni addressed with consultations, leaflets and a career day. Also the updated and newly-designed website of the NEC has been recently launched and is available at www.europass.hu.

Csilla Szabó | National Europass Centre Hungary

"Code: Europass" – a modern offer to young people

The Lithuanian NEC has developed an interactive online game "Code: Europass" to encourage young people to get familiar with, and to start using, the Europass documents. The player takes a classical VW "Hippie Bus", throws dices and moves the bus forward to the next stop. The road is marked with questions on European geography, education systems, working conditions and, most importantly, the Europass documents. A correct answer will allow the player to move on. The winner is the person who collects most points.

In the first round of the game 3 top scorers could win actual travel vouchers. There were also smaller prizes for players in the top 20. This resulted in more than 5.000 registered players and over 60.000 visitors from all over Lithuania.

Later the NEC updated the game with new questions and announced a second round. Success was huge again. One more round is planned for September-November. The game is also accessible through Facebook.

Lina Vegeliene | National Europass Centre Lithuania



Do you know Europe? The Europass game in Germany



Where exactly is Albania situated, where Lithuania? Do you know the capital of Macedonia? With the Europass game you can travel throughout Europe, from Finland to Malta and from Portugal to Turkey. The interactive game is a puzzle and an entertaining course of geography. Put the single countries - like jigsaw parts - in the right position on the map, find out which city is the capital of the country and get feedback immediately.

The game has been developed by the National Europass Centre Germany and is part of the CD Rom "Use the opportunities mobility offers: the Europass" targeting young people. [Try out here.](#)

Isabel Götter | National Europass Centre Germany

Next issue

Do not miss our next issue! In December 2012, the Europass Newsletter will unveil important changes and developments to be introduced in 2013.

Forthcoming are the following stories:

- The NEW Europass CV: how the best gets even better
- Europass Experience: toward recognition of non-formal learning outcomes
- European Skills Passport: all your skills, qualifications and experience in one dossier

Check [our website](#) regularly.



Education and Culture

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